

Application Number:	2012/0580	Application Type:	Full
Proposal:	Erection of 2/3-storey extension, including removal of 4 temporary buildings	Location:	Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School, Glen Road, Wateroot
Report of:	Planning Unit Manager	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Development Control Committee	Date:	15 th January 2013
Applicant:	Headmaster & Governors Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School	Determination Expiry Date:	
Agent:			

Contact Officer:	Richard Elliott	Telephone:	01706-238639
Email:	richardelliott@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

REASON FOR REPORTING	Tick Box
Outside Officer Scheme of Delegation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DEPARTURE
Member Call-In Name of Member: Reason for Call-In:	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 or more objections received	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state):	

HUMAN RIGHTS

The relevant provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights have been taken into account in the preparation of this report, particularly the implications arising from the following rights:-

Article 8

The right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence.

Article 1 of Protocol 1

The right of peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property.

1. RECOMMENDATION

That the application be approved for the reasons set out in Section 9 of the Report

2. SITE

The application relates to a parcel of land currently occupied by a temporary classroom block within the grounds of Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School. The main access to the school is off Glen Road, a steeply sloping road off Millar Barn Lane. The main school buildings are constructed in stone and slate to a height of three storeys and occupy a prominent, elevated position above Millar Barn Lane to the south of Glen Road. To its north, on the opposite side of Glen Road are two temporary classroom blocks, sited in front of a modern two storey stone and

slate building (The Clark Building), constructed circa 1997. The land falls to the east of the Clark Building and is occupied by a buffer area of trees and landscaping leading towards residential properties at the bottom of Glen Road. Car parking for the school is available in front of the main building and to the top of Glen Road, beyond which is a footpath leading to Waterfoot Primary and school playing fields. The site lies within a Countryside Area designated as Green Belt to the east of Waterfoot Town Centre.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 1990/161 Erection of Relocatable Buildings to Create Four Classrooms
Approved
- 1990/233 Demolition of Prefabricated classrooms and erection of six classroom teaching block (Clark Building)
Approved
- 1994/009 Two Storey Side Extension to Clarke Building
Approved
- 2008/0679 Car park bus layby incorporating new retaining wall and 10 no. 6 metre high lighting columns (Determined by Lancashire County Council)
Approved
- 2009/0514 New two storey block for 6 classrooms, including electrical transformer house with hard and soft landscaping (Determined by Lancashire County Council)
Approved
- 2009/0549 Consultation from Lancashire County Council - Variation of condition 1 of permission 14/08/0667 for the retention of 3 double demountable units for a period of 2 years (Determined by Lancashire County Council)
Approved

4. THE PROPOSAL

Following its recent achievement of Academy status the school now wishes to replace the two temporary classrooms (in addition to two that have already been removed from land further to the east) and to provide a purpose build eight classroom unit.

This would be achieved by constructing a two/three storey extension projecting southwards from the eastern side of the frontage of the Clarke Building. The main part of the extension would measure 20.5m x 18.3m and a height of 12.9m, reducing to 11m to the west. It would project no further than the existing temporary classroom on this area of land. The front and east side elevation (facing towards Millar Barn Lane) would be constructed in reconstituted stonework with dressed head and cills to the fenestration. That part of the extension facing to the west (away from Millar Barn Lane) would be more modern in appearance, with large areas of glazing and grey panel cladding with a blue stone plinth.

There would be a new path provided immediately in front of the extension and it is proposed to retain the existing planting/landscaped areas to the side with only one tree requiring removal.

5. POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Section 4 Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 7 Requiring Good Design

Section 8 Promoting Healthy Communities

Section 11 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Development Plan

Regional Spatial Strategy for the NW of England (2008)

Policy DP1-9 Spatial Principles

Policy RDF1 Spatial Priorities

RDF2 Rural Areas

RDF4 Green Belts

Policy RT 2 Managing Travel Demand

Policy RT4 Management of the Highway Network

Policy EM1 Environmental Assets

L1 Health, Sport, Recreation, Cultural & Educational Services Provision

Rossendale Core Strategy DPD (2011)

AVP 3 Waterfoot, Lumb, Cowpe and Water

Policy 1 General Development Locations and Principles

Policy 8 Transport

Policy 9 Accessibility

Policy 17 Rossendale's Green Infrastructure

Policy 18 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Landscape Conservation

Policy 23 Promoting High Quality Designed Spaces

Policy 24 Planning Application Requirements

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

LCC (Highways)

No objection subject to the following condition:

BRGS has an existing travel plan however, the plan should be reviewed annually from 2014 to 2019 when the Year 7 admissions are set to increase from 150 to 180 pupils.

The applicant should carry out a parking survey to ensure that there is capacity on the existing car parks to accommodate the 6 displaced vehicles.

Waterfoot Residents Association

No comments received

7. REPRESENTATIONS

To accord with the General Development Procedure Order 3 site notices were posted on 17/12/12, 123 neighbours were consulted by letter on 11/12/12 and a press notice was published on 21/12/12.

One letter of support has been received making the following comments:

- The elevation will not be greater than the surrounding buildings and therefore it should have minimal impact visually, whilst providing some of the required modern extra capacity the school needs.

8. ASSESSMENT

The main considerations of the application are: 1) Principle; 2) Visual Amenity; 3) Neighbour Amenity; and 4) Access/Parking.

Principle

The site lies within the Green Belt. As stated within Section 9 of the NPPF the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of green belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. New buildings within the Green Belt are considered inappropriate development, with few exceptions. It is considered that the extension would not meet any of the exceptions identified within Section 7 of the NPPF and therefore constitutes inappropriate development.

Accordingly very special circumstances would need to be advanced to outweigh the finding of inappropriateness.

The Government promotes the alteration and expansion of schools as expressed within Paragraph 72 of the NPPF: They state that the LPA should: “give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”

Due to its proposed siting to the north elevation the extension would not project further into the green belt than the existing building, which (was also permitted within the Green Belt) and would infill an area between the Clarke Building and the original school building and subsequent extensions on the opposite side of the road within the Urban Boundary. It would, therefore, not significantly reduce its impact on the openness of the Green Belt, projecting towards the Urban Boundary. Furthermore I am mindful that this would replace temporary classroom structures that are quite significant in size.

The Council are currently undertaking a Green Belt and Urban Boundary Review as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD. The Council are proposing that the area to which the application relates is removed from the Green Belt. Although little weight can be attached to the document at this stage it is a positive consideration in favour of the proposal.

Taking all of the above into account I do consider that the needs of the school and the replacement of existing temporary structures provide the very special circumstances that outweigh the finding of inappropriateness. Accordingly the application is considered acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity/Countryside Impact

Owing to its size and siting the extension would have some prominence when viewed from Glen Road and Millar Barn Lane. I am satisfied, however, that the design of the extension is such that from those public vantage points the extension would complement the main school building and its features so as not to adversely affect its strong, original character or the character of the area. The more modern aspect of the extension would be sited to the area least prominent. Whilst it is clearly a departure from the traditional build of the Clark Building and the main school building I do not consider that it would cause harm. The landscape buffer to the east would remain and I do not consider that the extension would require its enhancement owing to my views above. Due to its proposed siting projecting towards the existing buildings within the Urban boundary and the

existing building and structures already within the Green Belt in this location I do not consider that it would cause significant harm to the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

Neighbour Amenity

Separation distances are such that there would not be a significant loss of light, privacy or outlook to neighbours. The scheme is considered acceptable in terms of neighbour amenity.

Access/Parking

Six parking spaces would be lost to the side of the temporary classrooms. The Highway Authority has not objected to this, however, does request that the school carries out a parking survey to ensure existing car parks have capacity to accommodate the loss. They also request that the existing travel plan be reviewed annually from 2014 to 2019 when Year 7 pupil numbers are set to increase. The scheme is considered acceptable in terms of access/parking subject to the above.

9. SUMMARY REASON FOR APPROVAL

The scheme is considered inappropriate development within the Green Belt. However, considering that the existing building to be extended is also within the Green Belt, that the extension would not significantly impact on the openness of the Green Belt, that existing temporary classrooms would be removed and that the Government attaches great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools it is considered that very special circumstances have been demonstrated to outweigh the finding of inappropriateness. Furthermore it is considered that the development would not unduly affect the visual amenities of the area, neighbour amenity or highway safety. Accordingly the scheme is considered to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies DP1-9/RDF2/RDF4/L1/EM1 of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Policies 1 / 8 / 9 /23 and 24 of the Council's Core Strategy DPD (2011).

10. RECOMMENDATION

That the application be permitted subject to the following conditions.

11. CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: Required by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase 2004 Act.
2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawing numbers SK/32/1, SK/32/3, SK/0/4, SK/0/1, SK/0/3 and SK/0/2 dated 07 December by the Local Planning Authority, unless otherwise required by the conditions below or subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.
3. All stone and slate to be used in the extension hereby approved shall match in colour, form and texture that on the Clark Building unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies 1 and 24 of the Council's Core Strategy DPD (2011).
4. Any construction works associated with the development hereby approved shall not take place except between the hours of 7:00 am and 7:00 pm Monday to Friday and 8:00 am

and 1:00 pm on Saturdays. No construction shall take place on Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas Day or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbours, in accordance with Policy 24 of the Council's Core Strategy DPD (2011).

5. No trees shall be removed from the site unless otherwise authorised by this permission.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies 1 and 24 of the Council's Core Strategy DPD (2011).

6. Prior to first use of the extension hereby permitted the remaining temporary classroom block shall be removed from the site and the site landscaped in accordance with a scheme to be first submitted and approved by the LPA.

Reason: To define the permission, to protect the openness of the Green Belt in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies 1 and 24 of the Council's Core Strategy DPD (2011).

7. Prior to the commencement of development a review of the existing travel plan shall be submitted to the LPA to be reviewed annually by the applicants in association with Lancashire County Council from the period 2014-2019 including a parking survey to ensure that there is capacity on the existing car parks to accommodate the 6 vehicle spaces displaced by this permission. The approved details and schedule of works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: *In the interests of highway/pedestrian safety and use of sustainable transport modes, in accordance with Policies RT4 / RT9 of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Policies 8 / 9 / 24 of the Rossendale Core Strategy DPD (2011).*